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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DHA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 /077 W
----------089890 290611Z /20
R 281002Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9405
INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, TH
SUBJECT: THAI HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP ADVOCATES AMNESTY FOR DE-
TAINEES

SUMMARY: HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP PETITIONS NEW THAI GOVERNMENT TO GRANT AMNESTY TO ALL "POLITICAL DETAINEES." PETITION CALLS ON RTG TO RELEASE "THAMMASAT 18", THOSE IMPRISONED IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABORTIVE MARCH 26, COUP, AND PERSONS HELD UNDER NARC ORDERS AS BEING DETRIMENTAL TO SOCIETY. HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE, DR. KOSON SISANG, RESIGNED HIS POSITION AS GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THAILAND OCT. 27 BECAUSE OF CONTROVERSY WITHIN THE CHURCH
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ARISING FROM A LETTER HE WROTE TO FOXER PRIME MINISTER THANIN, WHICH EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER TRIAL PROCEDURES FOR "THAMMASAT 18". END SUMMARY.

1. THE COORDINATING GROUP FOR RELIGION AND SOCIETY (CGRS), A SMALL NON-DENOMINATIONAL ORGANIZATION INTERESTED IN HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAILAND, HAS SPONSORED

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A PETITION CALLING ON THE NEW GOVERNMENT TO GRANT
AMNESTY TO "POLITICAL DETAINEES". THE PETITION,

EPORTEDLY SIGNED BY OVER 600 PERSONS, SUPPORTS THE
ANNOUNCED AIMS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (RP) LEADERS
TO REDUCE TENSION AND BUILD UNITY IN THAILAND.

2. THE NATION (OCT. 28) QUOTED A CGRS SPOKESMAN AS
SAYING THE GROUP HAD THREE MAIN CATEGORIES OF PRISONERS
IN MIND IN REQUESTING THE AMNESTY. THE FIRST GROUP IS THE
18 STUDENTS AND ACTIVISTS ON TRIAL BY A MILITARY
COURT ON SEVERAL CHARGES, INCLUDING TREASON AND COMMUNIST
ACTIVITY IN CONNECTION WITH THE VIOLENCE AT THAMMASAT
UNIVERSITY ON OCT. 6, 1976. THE SECOND CATEGORY INCLUDES
ABOUT 20 PERONS SUMMARILY (TWO IN ABSENTIA) SENTENCEE TO
LONG PRISON TERMS FOR COMPLICITY IN THE ABORTIVE COUP
D'ETAT ON MARCH 26, 1977. THE THIRD GROUP
IDENTIFIED BY CGRS IS COMPRISED OF APPROXIMATELY 1,100
PERSONS DETAINED UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF NARC ORDER 22
AS DETRIMENTAL TO SOCIETY. GREAT BULK OF THOSE
DETAINED UNDER NARC ORDER 22 ARE HELD ON CRIMINAL RATHER
THAN POLITICAL CHARGES).

3. IN A SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE,
DR. KOSON SISANG, RESIGNED HIS POSITION AS GENERAL
SECRETARY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THAILAND, OCT.
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27. KOSON WHO IS A PAST DIRECTOR OF CGRS, HAD BEEN
CRITICIZED IN RECENT MONTHS BY CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS
WITHIN HIS CHURCH WHO EXPRESSED DISAPPROVAL OVER AN
OPEN LETTER HE WROTE TO FORMER PM THANIN ON AUG. 31,
WHICH CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO PERMIT THE
"THAMMASAT 18" TO BE TRIED IN A CIVILIAN COURT. KOSON
IS A CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER OF THEWORLD COUNCIL OF
CHURCHES AND ONE OF FOUR PRESIDENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN
CONFERENCE OF ASIA.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH KOSON AND OTHER WHO ARE
CONCERNED ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAILAND HAVE EXPRESSED
HOPE THAT NEW RTG WILL BE MORE RESPONSIVE THAN THANIN
GOVERNMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES, WE HAVE SEEN
NOTHING TO INDICATE MILITARY LEADERS PLAN TO ALTER
SUBSTANTIALLY POLICIES LAID DOWN BY NARC ON OCT. 6,
1976. NARC ORDER 22, WHICH EMPOWERS GOVERNMENT TO DETAIN
PERSONS CONSIDERED DANGEROUS TO SOCIETY OR THREATS
TO NATIONAL SECURITY, IS STILL IN FORCE.

5. ALTHOUGH CONSTITUTION OF OCT. 22, 1976, HAS BEEN
ABROGATED, GOVERNMENT LEADERS CURRENTLY OVERSEEING

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PREPARATION OF NEW INTERIM CONSTITUTION ARE REPORTED TO FAVOR RETENTION, IN SME FORM, OF POWERS OF SUMMARY PUNISHMENT EMBODIED IN ARTICLE 21 OF OLD CONSTITUTION.

6. JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S OFFICE AT DEFENSE MINISTRY INFORMS US THAT NEXT SESSION OF TRIAL OF "THAMMASAT 18" IS STILL SCHEDULED FOR NOV. 17 AT THAI ARMY FACILITY AT NONTHABURI IN BANGKOK SUBURBS.

7. THERE IS SOME SPECULATION THAT THOSE PERSONS IHPLICATED IN THE ABORTIVE COUP LED BY GEN. CHALAT HIRANYASIRI ON MARCH 26 WILL BE RELEASED FROM PRISON OR HAVE THEIR SENTENCES REDUCED.
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Message Attributes

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Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Subject: THAI HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP ADVOCATES AMNESTY FOR DE- TAINEES SUMMARY: HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP PETITIONS NEW THAI GO
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, TH
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